

# THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN.









sever" (Rom. vii. 13). This world-wide invitation is a great encouragement to an ardent workman, as every soul is now "without excuse." We now come to St. Peter's part in this history. Peter had to be specially prepared for his work: Why not? Because it would be contrary to his own mind and will. As a Jew, Peter had been brought up to have nothing to do with the Gentiles. "God was now about to send him to Gentile. To prepare him for it, God gives him a vision on the housetop. He sees a great sheet let down from heaven, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air" (v. 11, 12). The Jewish laws were very strict concerning what might be eaten and what might not be eaten—various animals and all "creeping things" were forbidden. Yet Peter was now commanded to eat. "Kill and eat," though he was "very hungry," as we are told in his own words, he refused to obey the command. "Then God's messenger came to him, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." What God had cleansed, Peter must be willing to receive. The vision was repeated three times, unobscured lessons, and then Peter had only a little time in which to consider the matter before all was made clear to him in the arrival of Cornelius' messengers to fetch him. In obedience to the vision of the Spirit (v. 19), he is willing and ready to go. He sees now what God's plan is, and though it was contrary to his own way, he is ready for it in following first we must continually be ready to give up our own will and our own way. Let this be one lesson for our school. And let us also learn the blessedness of God's "whosoever" the message of the gospel of Christ now gives in His name, to "all people, and kindred, and nations, and tongues." Have we accepted the message?

M. E.

**READER ALICE.**—A very pleasant habit for home life is to read a good novel every pleasant look in the evening; and if the selection of the book is wise, it certainly affords a most agreeable variety of pleasure, and lightens the dreariness of the mother, who often sits alone with her basket of stockings to be darned, and who has a dreary time, if each member of the family she does not get out takes his or her paper or book, as I have often seen, and whiles into their own interesting reading, leaving her to her own meditation. A book read aloud at home gets a charm imparted from itself. Sometimes its very name will comfort us in our memories, as in the last few paragraphs of this series of articles, then, perhaps, unbroken, the cheerful thrills, and frequently too, the comments upon what is being read, which add to the interest and give a never-fading memory. The same association supplies a piece of work which is in operation when any book is being read.—*South and West.*

**A RECOMMENDATION.**—If any one is fatigued the best restorative is health, a tumbler of the beverage as hot as it can be sipped. This is far more of a restorative than any "tonic" drink.

## Madge's Faith.

### CHAPTER I.

"LITTLE Madge believes in me if no one else does," Edger Hanbury began the letter he had just written into the envelope, as he gazed at the sheet of paper with doubtful confidence. He put on his best coat and hat, and started for the post, his pleasant anticipations were on the most joyful thoughts, and his mind was absorbed in reflection.

"I hope I shall disappoint her—sayhow, I'm glad to try it, as I've told her in the letter. I certainly ought to be getting on now—six-and-twenty

next birthday!" A sigh interrupted his musings, as a feeling of regret swept through his mind that he could not put the dial of time back a few years. Memory of wasted opportunities, lost chances, departed shades on his brow; but these glooms of the past were scattered by the enlivening recollection that years long experience, and experience is a safeguard against other failures. Remembering his habitual elasticity of spirits, and remembering that he stimulates the energies, while regrets weaken them, he began to think of the new possibilities; an account of which, were faithfully given to his sister Margaret in the letter that he dropped into the post office.

The day, Edger debated within himself as to how he should spend the rest of the evening. He had but few friends in the neighbourhood of his lodgings, which were situated in Leeches, a pleasant suburb in the north-east district. Acquaintances had many, and

most of them he hadly thought over several in his mind; his feet were already turning stationary when he guessed as though he went into a fresh channel.

"I did promise to go one night," he mused, "and that Mr. Edgemoor is a very pleasant fellow; it is Thursday, and it does not begin till a quarter to eight."

This resolve brought fresh cogitations to his mind; he panned with a perplexed look, as from the light of the lamp under which he stood, he critically surveyed something he drew from a forty-pocketed satchel.

It was a rather shabby-looking white handkerchief which Edger had intended replacing by a fresh one, but in his hurry to post the letter that born altogether forgotten.

He was particularly in these small but important moments. Madge always had the secret of his pleasant appearance was a marked owing to the frictions of his attire as to his own personal good looks, and she felt a pride in her brother because it was so. "See him when you see," she would say with exaltation, "he is always tidy, he detests a dishevelled as much as I do."

As he stood beneath the lamp, Edger critically looked at though he detected the line of his handkerchief at that moment. Not that it was really so bad, but that it wasn't fresh, he told himself, and certainly it did not quite correspond with the sober and well-tanned smooth his great coat.

His countenance brightened, a brilliant idea occurred to him; he would buy a new one ready-hemmed; it would be so much easier than going home for another, and then he would go into the temperance meeting. He had been so often invited by the clergyman of the parish church, and which Edger, when he spent his Sunday in Leeches, generally attended. He now carefully commenced looking about him. Drapers were by no means scarce at that locality, and he was soon at the door of Messrs. Edgemoor and Co.

As he was about to enter he noticed two persons behind him, and stopped politely, knocking the door open for them to pass before him. Then he found himself in the well-lighted shop, with its temptingly laid-out counters, and rows of chairs occupied by many isolated purchasers.

A little out of his element, he looked with bewilderment about him, and stood awkwardly by the side of the two females who had entered with him.

"Doing several air's" what may we have the pleasure of showing you?" Demanding the proffered chair Edger accepted a chair in less than five minutes, and he was fully employed, to a "little shopping." The shop was fully a brick town gaiter, and the sundries "some" to serve Edger was not so many a matter.

It was the busy-time of the evening—the parcel between tea and supper when a convenient hour is found by hard-working mothers and others, whose days are fully employed, to a "little shopping." The shop was fully a brick town gaiter, and the sundries "some" to serve Edger was not so many a matter.

His attention was drawn to the counter on the left, evidently another and daughter by the likeness. They also were waiting till "some one" was at leisure to attend to them. Part of their conversation reached his ears; it accounted for the anxious look of their faces. Thus, mistakingly, he learnt something of their circumstances.

"If you were served, sir?" A young lady proceeded behind in front of him with the impudent "Pocket handkerchiefs, if you please, white ones ready hemmed."

The article required was placed before him for inspection and his choice was soon made. Then came the bill and the waiting for "cash" to see that all was right. While this was going on and his change being prepared for him, he was so ignorant to note the couple in whom he began to take an interest. They also were waiting to be served. "That is all we say they had the attention of the shop-keeper and his assistants, who with him was listening to an explana-



The New Year.—The chosen time to lead a yearlier life.—Page 23.

There were various ways in which he could have passed the night, but his mind fast on new resolutions, and in respect of this fortunate situation for which he was trying, he did not feel inclined to brood on the old one. He advanced down the high street of Leeches. The gas was absent and the shops looked dismal. A few stalls lined the road, making with their flaring jets of light a small illumination on their own account.

He passed the railway station, a train was just in, and passengers were hurrying hither and thither. Should he take the train and go down and see little Madge? as he always called the sister on the strength of his six years' absence. No—he was so favourable with Aunt Theodosy, and she was never pleased to see him—leaves he had just posted a letter to Margaret who, to his endless regret, lived with her aunt.

It would not be too late to get to some place of



The Gilmore were old friends of Mrs. Thesley, and since the death of Mr. Gilmore their acquaintance had been greatly estranged. For many months they had had a hard struggle to exist at all, and it is a long road that one is treading, and that every day a letter home from Mrs. Gilmore containing more satisfactory news than had been heard of her for a long time.

To return to Edgar-Hamberg. By great good fortune he had been the one chosen out of several hundreds of applicants in the army in the firm of Legard, Bissell & Co. He had no amount of good things, and with steadiness and perseverance he was here a midshipman.

Of course he was greatly elated with his new prospects. When he obtained his last situation, which he held in a most fortunate manner, it was just the same. He returned into the engagement, to excellent spirits, but alas! he got worried of the same kind of duties. He was soon worried of his employment, so to say, and was always seeking continual change. His Aunt Thesley might well call him a rattle-drum, and for that in a few months' time, or even less, he would again be looking for something fresh.

But in his letter to "Little Madge" he had promised to keep this. "No more changes for me—no more settling," he wrote. Memory of which sentence sent "Little Madge" sneering willy-nilly down the page for the rest of that day and many following. But Aunt Thesley, whenever Edgar's name was mentioned, still continued to shake her head and sigh.

Either such an infirmus Madge might have lost faith in her brother, had he not armed herself of a more sure spec to all—a more sure point for the well-meaning of others than all else besides. Faith in the power of prayer gave the unruffled light to Margaret's eyes, and an unflinching cheerfulness to her mind. She believed that by praying for her loved ones at the throne of grace we form a stronger protection around them than by any other way.

Time went on, bringing little change in the lives of the residents at Hallow Cottage. Edgar had been in his new situation a fortnight, and really was giving his name to his relatives to complain of him. But Aunt Thesley—so firmly were her old prejudices rooted in her mind—still persisted in her several opinions, that Edgar would gain in her several opinions. It was in vain that Margaret tried to her brother, and grew warmly indignant at every suggestion in more so than her own. Aunt Thesley obstinately refused to believe, and "Little Madge" at length desisted from argument, content in his private spec for himself.

## CHAPTER III.

Hallow Cottage was situated in a very pretty part of Hallow. Clearing laws and very picturesque hills surrounded its neighbourhood; and in spring and summer the air was fragrant with the sweet scent of flowers.

The mistress of the pleasant dwelling, which was a perfect tower of freedom and comfort, had a very kind heart when her presence was required. As the spring came on and the country abounded in beauty, she began to entertain over a plan that she thought would give pleasure and be of benefit to another.

"Margaret, my dear," Mrs. Thesley never gladdened Mrs. Gilmore's eyes by the loving word of Madge or "Little Madge" perhaps for she always said that Edgar suited her best. "Margaret, my dear, I've a plan in my head that I think you will like very much. I'm thinking of having a little company this spring. Madge's eye brightened when she heard of this, and she said that such a proposition should forth be passed forth by her.

"Yes, Aunt, my dear," said she. "I have been thinking," replied Mrs. Thesley, "of the many who are in want of a home, and that a little change would do Mrs. Gilmore and her two good girls, and as some as Sophia sent forward with the spring-cleaning, and we are all so rights again, I think them to come."

Madge only knew Mrs. Gilmore and Beatrice by name, she had never seen them since long ago, but personally remembered as little of them as she still could.

Others at Hallow Cottage were almost unknown, and the prospect of a new company was a pleasant excitement. The little preparation was a pleasant way was an agreeable change from the every-day routine, though all the household, even in Princess,

were easily put about by the extraordinary and dancing, or which Sophia insisted in view of the proposed invitation. Hallow Cottage was always a good-looking and bright place, but by the time the invitation was sent to Mrs. Gilmore, the good old mahogany furniture were laid aside, and the parlour was being cleaned, as lightly as it pulled for the occasion of the visit.

Mrs. Gilmore gladly accepted the kind proposal for herself and daughter; and that day went to arrive at Hallow Cottage.

It stands out, Beatrice never soon good friends; and Aunt Thesley and Mrs. Gilmore spent pleasant hours in reviving old memories of the long ago.

Sorrow had stamped somewhat heavily on each; but the floods had not least unconsciously by months, which had passed through the gloomiest hours. To each was tempered the wind as she had said her heart.

Mrs. Gilmore was rich in the love of her child, in the growing certainty of a happy future for her—at least a future that promised well.

A serene expression lighted her face features as she sat in her friend's sunny parlour the day after her arrival. She and her old friend were the only occupants of the room; the very afternoon had tempered Margaret and Beatrice into the truth against with its varied scenery.

The sight of the young girls deepened the light in Mrs. Gilmore's face. They seemed so happy together, and now and then, their faces dimpled into smiles. Mrs. Thesley followed the direction of her friend's eyes, and smiled, too.

"Beatrice is a pleasant companion for Margaret;—she seems to have plenty of her own."

"Yes; I wonder! I don't like to tell anything yet about herself," exclaimed Mrs. Gilmore, in answer to Mrs. Thesley's look of inquiry. At any cost, she would not mind by telling any of her own. This was natural to her, gentle tones, and the typical heart looked as though she was living very well, but very busy days, with a golden crown and hope, the story of Beatrice's engagement. "I think she will be very happy," concluded Mrs. Gilmore, with a grateful infusion of voice.

"In my view, please to hear it," Mrs. Thesley passed abruptly, but her friend, who knew her so well, understood what was in her mind. "But you are afraid we are over-estimating her prospect of happiness, are you not, Madge?"

"No, not that, but you know it is a long and long road," Mrs. Thesley said, and Mrs. Gilmore's head she laid aside the veil.

"Yes, you are thoughtful and unsatisfactory," admitted Mrs. Gilmore, a shade of sarcasm overshadowing her benign countenance, which lightened again she said, "but Mrs. Anne is in all that we could wish, steady, persevering, kind-hearted and above all, a Christian—without that assurance of heaven on another her hope of being happy I feel with the bestow as his acknowledgment. Mother, no man will ever go far wrong," added Mrs. Gilmore, who had her eyes shining both in the assertion.

"Deep sigh from Aunt Thesley fell on her ears, and Mrs. Gilmore saw for the moment that she meant that something was troubling her. It was not the yenning of the mistress of Hallow Cottage to spread domestic peace, but in the case of her own child she would make the exception—it would follow her mind to speak of the argument that opposed it.

"I wish the good in account could be given of every young man," she said, "truly a joyful impression, truly, but I dare not and exceptions, indeed—there's the woman's fault."

"I didn't know she had one," interrupted Mrs. Gilmore.

"Oh! the mother's family brought him up," the small smile of her kind frowning of the circle, which implied all that entailed. "And he is, in the opinion of all you've described, unimpaired, justifying, devoid of moral error—indeed, there's no fault to find on his mistakes. I've long come to put faith in his promises." If Aunt Thesley had had the more faith in them, she would have been more correct; for in Edgar's case prejudice had already blinded her eyes.

Mrs. Gilmore looked thoughtful and sympathetic.

"Well, but he may alter," she answered, happily.

"The friend of mine. I've been speaking, was not always as strongly given as he is now. I believe, but I don't know. I'm easily afraid."

The words came in a sigh of such true heart length, and it was a moment or two before the venerable heart uttered quite such a word.

To divert her friend's thoughts, Mrs. Gilmore returned to the subject of her projects, with a brief

statement of the manner in which she and her daughter, Beatrice, were acquainted with the subject of her conversation. "They had known me another by sight for some time; but it was not till they met at a ball gathering in the neighbourhood, and were introduced, that they got upon speaking terms."

"What name did you call him last year?" Mrs. Thesley's question seemed unnecessary, for at that moment the girls returned to the sitting room. Perhaps her conversation they had in their mind, and somewhat to do with the rather brilliant than Beatrice's cheeks; or it might have been entirely owing to the activity of the ear; or, perhaps, her eyes had an additional sparkle, which Madge's barely shared with suppressed mirth.

The points must begin to pay regular visits to Hallow Cottage, and Sophia, with much importance and no little secrecy announced, "for Mrs. Gilmore," she had heard Beatrice the latter; which were signed quietly into her pocket, all she had some indistinct moment to read them.

A part of those letters, as her mother's request, Beatrice read about some attention to Aunt Thesley and Margaret. The warm spring sunshine streamed into the pretty room as the work the ladies were busily engaged on. The few soft tones of the speaker's voice had a power in the words, adding a charm to the surroundings which were not, without their being their lovers.

It was a simple statement of a meeting the wife of the latter was, with an account of his own feelings on the subject.

It was a temporary gathering, and Beatrice's correspondent words of the good such meetings were likely to do, and of the pleasure in speaking by example and effort in such a cause—the few happy notes to be derived in doing the Master's work. There were many simple and beautiful ideas on the subject; and Mrs. Thesley's own she said, still read them out for the public good. When she had done, there was a pause for a moment, while Aunt Thesley removed her glasses and wiped them with her white embroidered handkerchief.

As soon as she could steady her voice she murmured, "Beautiful, my dear, beautiful; it has touched a chord of memory. It reminds me of the dear old brother Edgar; he had just such sentiments, noble and good."

Aunt Thesley was not the only one affected by the simple lines. "Little Madge" seemed well pleased with her feelings; while Mrs. Gilmore was quietly, but with the effect the reading had on the hearts.

"The young man who wrote that line is a beautiful mind, my dear," Aunt Thesley said in her most impressive manner to Beatrice, "as you feel that I trust her happiness in his keeping, I only wish there were a few more such. I shall be delighted to make his acquaintance."

"Will you really, Mrs. Thesley? I shall be so pleased. He, I know will like to come here here," Beatrice exclaimed and blushed with pleasure as she spoke.

The afternoon an invitation was sent to Mrs. Gilmore and daughter, to be present at a ball on the following Saturday and Sunday at Hallow Cottage.

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Saturday morn'g the guest was to arrive by the five o'clock train. Half-an-hour previous to that time Beatrice went upstairs to put on her hat and get ready to go to the station.

Margaret remained with her aunt and Mrs. Gilmore. The swing of the garden gate, followed by a latch, first found in the gravel.

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